[SLIDE 1]

Now you may be wondering what on earth does a 19th-century philosopher talking about ancient Greek tragedy have to do with a movie like 2001 or with the sci-fi genre more generally, well, I hope over the next two lectures to draw out some of the underlying connections. And since we’re dealing with sci-fi -- we’re going to get a glimpse of how some of Schopenhauer’s ideas intersect with recent ideas in theoretical astrophysics and theories of scientific explanation – but over and beyond ***this*** we will see how Nietzsche shapes some of Schopenhauer’s ideas into a theory about how we can perhaps more optimistically approach art and the question of meaning in our lives.

Now, one of the most important things to take from Nietzsche involves the distinction between understanding and experiencing / between explanation and expression / between knowing and feeling– these distinctions are important for a movie like 2001 on multiple levels – we might think about this in relation to the strange, enigmatic, inscrutable (and seemingly anti-Hollywood) style of 2001, but also about what the message of the film is telling us, if indeed it IS telling us anything at all – you may remember that idea that arose out of the less optimistic reading of Freuds theory of the death drive – was that maybe the point of art is not to make the experience of pain meaningful, but that maybe a work of art doesn’t have to be meaningful at all – maybe art can simply be an expression in fact a CELEBRATION of meaninglessness itself. And this idea is at the heart of Nietzche’s work – the Birth of Tragedy. But we shouldn’t see this idea – the celebration of meaninglessness as somehow nihilistic or pessimistic – in fact, what I hope to show is that according to Nietzsche – if we embrace and celebrate every aspect of our lives , including the seeming meaninglessness of it all – we can see that contrary to what Schopenhauer has to tell us about the inexorable pain of existence – life truly IS worth living, but NOT as Schopenhauer says because we can find ways to turn our backs on the world – by becoming monks or by using art as a form of escapism – rather Nietzsche shows us that if we embrace the world – try to experience it to the fullest extent, if we lead vibrant, creative lives, then we can see that life truly is an amazing gift, even if there is no big picture, even if it all amounts to nothing as Schopenhauer suggests. What makes life worthwhile, what makes it meaningful, according to Nietzsche – is not the hope of some future Heaven, or even the hope that our names will go down in History or something like that – rather what makes life worth living, what makes it meaningful – is our ability as creative individuals to make life meaningful – to make it worthwhile. And so even in the face of Schopenhauers dismal analysis of the state of the world – we have with Nietzsche a fundamentally optimistic outlook – as long as we affirm life – affirm every aspect of our lives – every pain, every moment of senselessness makes life worthwhile. Perhaps another way to see this is to ask the following question: “does the fact that we are all going to die, and so is everyone we love and everyone who will ever come after us – and that the sun will run out of energy, that perhaps even the entire universe will at some point cease to exist – if everyone you love will die – does this mean that there is no value in loving them? I think most of us would say no it doesn’t mean this at all – Another way of looking at this if you have the chance to save someone’s life, does the fact that they will die at some point mean - you shouldn’t bother saving them, since after all in the big picture, a single life amounts to nothing at all? If your answer is no, then you are thinking along the lines of what Nietzsche is getting at here – that our lives as we live them NOW in THIS world are beautiful, and that **maybe** the fact that everything will come to an end – in fact makes our lives that much more precious. Not only that but what Nietzsche actually says is that when we are too focused on the big picture – what does it all mean what does it amount to? This actually makes us devalue life – its life negating. And what Nietzsche wants to do is to affirm life to live in the fullest most vibrant, most creative way possible – in short to make every aspect of life into an artwork.

* one idea Nietzsche comes back to again and again throughout his life is, as he says, the idea that “only as an aesthetic phenomenon is the world justified” – now this might seem a bit opaque at first, but if you consider everything I just said, you can already start to see the basic idea ---- that even if life – as Schopenhauer tells us – even if life is essentially meaningless, even if existence does NOT ultimately make sense, this shouldn’t lead us to turn our backs on the world – maybe Shopenhauer’s wrong – maybe the point is not to try to make sense of the senselessness of existence, to try to gain mastery over the world through understanding it – maybe the point is simply to experience the world, to experience our lives to fullest extent possible – according to Nietzsche, this is what it means to live vibrant, creative lives –
* And this is deeply related to what I said about how we can approach movies like vertigo and 2001 – when we focus too much on the content – when we focus on trying to understand a movie in terms of the big picture or the point the movie is making, we miss out on the experience of it as a work of art. But movies like 2001, movies that don’t really make sense, can open our eyes to another way to approach art – one that makes us pay more attention to our experience of the world – not as a problem to be understood or solved, but as an aesthetic phenomenon, or once again, as Nietzsche tells us, “only as an aesthetic phenomenon is the world justified”.

ZARATHUSTRA

But beyond this – 2001 is also directly connected to other ideas in Nietzsche’s work – the opening music – the famous – “that song from 2001” – is really the opening to Also Sprach Zarathustra, a musical reflection by Richard Strauss on Nietzsche’s work of the same name. And this music appears three times in the movie at important moments, it’s there in the opening title sequence, but it is also connected with important leaps between scenes – important moments where a character seems to have reached a moment of transcendence – either in terms of evolution – for instance with the apes – or in terms of consciousness – as in the final scene. And in fact Kubrick was deeply influenced by Nietzsche at the conceptual stages of the silms creation – but Kubrick has his own idiosyncratic reading of Nietzsche – call it perhaps productive misunderstanding - So it will be interesting to get a sense of how Kubrick departs from Nietsche’s ideas as well. And in any case, I think that the Birth of tragedy is in many ways a better fit for examining Nietzsche’s influence on Kubrick in 2001 than Zarathustra – which we will look at more closely in the next lecture.

Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music

One of the central ideas Nietsche is working with in the opening to the book is this idea that he calls the principle of individuation or the Principium Individuationis.

So, Let’s take a look at this idea:

One of the things I said when I was talking about the way music is used in Vertigo is that the diegetic music (for instance music by Mozart) is sort of on the level of the daylight narrative, what happens onscreen, etc. etc., but that the non-diegetic music (the Wagner-style music) functions as sort of a subconscious level of narrative, for instance in the way it combines the themes of Vertigo or Death, and the Love theme, which is associated with desire and so on. But one thing I said: was that its interesting how in any movie, non-diegetic music, when it’s done well-- doesn’t just convey information about the character’s emotional states, but actually makes us experience the same emotional state as the characters, not only that, but that it in some sense connects each member of the audience at the level of feeling – we feel each others emotional state as well – so that there seems to be this profound sense of connection we experience when a piece of music moves us. And in fact this community-building aspect of music is one of the most important properties of music in every culture.

Now, what’s very interesting here is that Schopenhauer thinks that this sort of unity that we feel with other people when we experience music is actually one of the ways that music helps us tap into the will, the underlying reality of the world. And also remember, what I said is that for Schopenhauer, the world – the universe -- is one big verb, one constantly changing developing process – and to talk about the universe as thing or even a collection of things – a bunch of stuff – is to fundamentally misrecognize it – just a representation we use to understand the world – its not the way the world really is. And that music acts as a way that we can return to this state of primordial unity in the way it connects us – for instance to the emotional states of others – so that we are all connected, not on the level of feeling. Now usually when we try to understand the world – we have to talk about it in terms of distinct objects that do things to each other – but if we can melt away this illusion – we can glimpse the underlying unity of the universe, and again Schopenhauer is heavily influenced by Hinduism here – he talks about this illusion, the way we see the world in terms of the veil of Maya – which he takes from the Upanishads. But as we’ll see in a minute this idea might not be as far-fetched as it seems.

And in fact – Schopenhauer thinks that one of the things that can make us really unhappy in life is that - in some sense deep down we know that the world is unified in this way, but in order to understand it, to analyze the world, we have to turn it into distinct objects – in fact that’s what analysis literally means – analysis means to loosen up – to pull apart – splitting apart the unity that is at the fundamental level of reality.

[SLIDE 2]

Now, Schopenhauer identifies two mechanisms that we necessarily impose on the world in order to understand it.

1. **Individuation**
2. **Causality (cause and effect)**

[SLIDE 3]

The idea of individuation – or as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche call it, the principium individuationis (the principle of individuation) – is really at the most basic level of understanding, it is a logical principle that underlies the principle of causality -> in order to say anything about the world at all – like I understand x – or even I experience x let alone understand x – we have to think of the world in terms of different things – something that experiences and something that to be experienced, something that understands and something that is to be understood – in epistemology – the study of knowledge - we talk about the **subject** – the thing that understands and the **object** the thing to be understood. And of course underlying even this is the most basic axiom of logic, which Aristotle calls the law of identity – that A=A. That a thing just is the thing that it is. In order to say any thing at all we have to accept this axiom. In fact what Aristotle says is that in order to deny this axiom you have to affirm it first – in order to say the law of identity is false you first have to say there is a law of identity at all. And Aristotle thinks that this law of identity is at the most fundamental level of reality. To talk about reality at all we need to accept that there is a thing called reality that is identical to itself. So, what actually exists, what we call reality or the universe is a thing.

But why should we accept that this actually describes reality as it is in itself – maybe this just describes how we have to think about reality - maybe the way we think about reality turns it into a thing, for instance as I said before in another lecture, our language takes nouns to be primary , you know an verb is a noun, a thing, but nouns are not verbs. But if you think about a chair, for instance, is it a thing or is it a process? Or to take a certain view from theoretical physics – you can think of how at an atomic level matter involves interactions of particles and underlying particles are energy states – “vibrations” so that the most fundamental level of reality is not comprised of static things, but states of motion. But of course to talk about motion in terms of states is already to thingify it to turn it into a thing.

Or to take the example of the big bang – here we have an event that gives rise to enormous energy that in turn gives rise to the subatomic particles of matter. So that we have a situation where, just like in that cartoon, physics gives rise to chemistry, which gives rise to biology all the way up to life that is self-conscious that creates things like society, etc. but underlying all this is this unified event from which everything emerges. And as some recent research suggests, underlying even the big bang is what’s called a singularity a point in which all physical laws are indistinguishable from one another, where space and time merge indistinguishably and no longer have any independent meaning.

So maybe the idea that true reality is unified is not so crazy after all.

In any case, in order for us to understand reality we have to talk about it in terms of separate and distinct, individual things. This is the principle of individuation.

To recap: I’ve mentioned two of these separate, individual things – a knower and something to be known.

But another way the principle of individuation works in explanation involves cause and effect. In order to explain something, to understand it, we have to separate causes and their effects – if causes and effects are unified – if they’re the same thing, then explanation is impossible.

[SLIDE 4]

But as you might have guessed, Schopenhauer also thinks that causality is something that we impose on reality in order to explain it, but that it is not really descriptive of how reality is in itself.

Whenever we try to develop an explanation or scientific theory about anything we have this idea that there are no gaps in nature 🡪 everything we observe has to have a cause. And so we experience everything in terms of a chain of cause and effect that gives rise to everything we might observe. There’s this idea of necessary connection between a cause and its effects – you can look at this in terms of the difference between causation and correlation 🡪 when we say that event 1 is a cause for event 2 we’re saying that the event 1 and event 2 are necessarily connected – a correlation would be a situation where event 1 happens and event 2 just coincidentally also happens but that they aren’t necessarily connected. So you know I’m playing pool – the cue ball hits the 8 ball and makes it move – we say that the cue ball caused the 8 ball to move. Alternatively, imagine the cue ball hits the 8 ball and my opponent sneezes, and this happens each time the cue ball hits the 8 ball – but the sneezes and the pool balls hitting each other are only correlated – it just so happens that every time the cue ball hits the 8 ball my friend sneezes. So to say that the cue ball hitting the 8 ball is the cause for the 8 balls motion is to say that they are necessarily connected.

So this all makes sense (I hope) But you know it’s a little strange that we should experience the world in this way – because even though we think we see the cue ball causing the 8 ball to move, we never actually see causation itself – we see the cue ball move, we see the 8 ball move, we see the cue ball move, we see the 8 ball move, so it’s pretty strange that we should think of causality as necessary -> really all we see is correlation after correlation after correlation – in other words every time we observed the cue ball hit the 8 ball – as far as we know the 8 ball just happened to move – in fact in order to **prove** that the cue ball **causes** the 8 ball to move we would have to set up an **infinite** *number* of experiments where we make cue balls hit 8 balls – and to show that causality is **logically** necessary we’d have to set up an infinity of past, present and future experiments as well.

And of course this is something we could never do – so whether cause and effect is a matter of **necessary** connection, is a question that is outside the limits of what can possibly be known. The best we can do is make predictions about what is likely to happen, but we can never have absolute certainty.

In other words we can’t possibly observe causality – so really when we’re talking about causality what we’re talking about is habit we have of seeing event 1 happen before event 2 – we have a habit of seeing correlations and calling them causes. This is how 18th century philosopher empiricist David Hume explains the problem.

But Kant has a slightly different approach, for Kant the experience of causality is not just a habit, it’s hard-wired into how we experience the world – we experience causal connections all over the place – in fact we can’t help but see these connections. And so when we talk about causality as **necessary** - its not something that’s necessary about the **world** as it is in itself - it’s something that’s necessary about how we ***see*** the world...And again -- we’ve seen a similar idea with Freud and the smiley face sunset, in montage and the mutant giraffe dog – even though these sorts of connections are not in the world, in true reality, we can’t help but see them.

And beyond this there seems to be a problem with the whole idea of causality as a means of explanation – because if everything that exists comes out of a chain of cause and effect – then what is the explanation of the chain itself? Is it self-caused? How could this be?

It seems as though the fundamental level of reality is based on some kind of contradiction – a situation that is in tension with itself. And in contrast to Aristotle, who thinks that the most fundamental level of reality involves identity, A=A, that there is a thing we call identity that is identical to itself, With Schopenhauer it seems as if the most basic thing we could say about reality is that it has the form of the sentence – “this sentence is false”. An axiom that is intension with itself -- and I think that this is why Schopenhauer thinks that reality just amounts to the constant striving and tumult of the will – because the whole of reality is in some sense self-contradictory unity.

Now one really interesting thing here is that because causality is so closely tied to explanation – when we try to explain something, we try to find its cause that’s what explanation means – if you think that causality is a real property of the world, then you might be lead to believe that everything has a cause and so we should be able to explain everything in the world. That the universe makes sense.

But if you think that causality is an illusion – we have a situation where we might think there are things in the world that don’t make sense and in fact will never make sense – that the universe is fundamentally unexplainable. And this distinction is at the heart of one of the most iconic things from the movie 2001, that is symbolized by the monolith, namely the distinction between scientific knowledge and magic– knowledge involves explanation, if something can be known, it can be explained – but magic just means something that can’t be explained. Or as Arthur C. Clarke, the coauthor of 2001 puts it “Any sufficiently advanced **technology** is indistinguishable from **magic**.” So is the monolith an alien technology, is it magic or is it both?

But this distinction between knowledge and magic, between reason and myth, is also a hugely important idea in the Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music by Friedrich Nietzsche.

[SLIDE 5]

Now what Nietzsche says is that in ancient Greek tragedy – but I think this applies to artistic creation generally – Nietzsche says is that there were two ways to respond to this idea the basic level of reality is blind striving and tumult, and the idea when you think about it - the world doesn’t really seem to make sense. One approach is to try to clarify everything – to pull apart the underlying unity and confusion of existence into distinct objects that we can explain – causes / effects and so on. Nietzche identifies this approach with Apollo the sun god, the god that gives light and clarity to the world.

And the other approach is to go with the flow of the world, not to try to understand and explain everything, but to try to experience the chaos of the world in its fullness in effect to become one with the chaos – you know - sex, drugs and rock n’ roll– he identifies this with Dionysius the god of wine, and intoxication.

So the two main responses in Greek tragedy to the underlying unity and chaos of the world come to be known in terms of the Apollonian and Dionysian.

[SLIDE 6]

So on one side you have Dionysian elements of art – the emotional aspects of art, which mimic the chaos of reality – for instance in musical dissonance, in the qusi-religious elements of aesthetic experience that seem opaque and mysterious but also transcendent – and which are associated with the experience of a loss of individuality, for instance in intoxication or psychedelic experiences, that kind of thing –

and you have the Apollonian elements in art – rationality - those elements of art that give order to the underlying chaos – the way that consonance resolves the chaos of dissonance – the way, as Freud tells us, that artistic creation, and dreams sublimate the underlying chaotic drives of the unconscious, they organize it into socially useful forms of activity – art, technology, -- and give our desires a sense of clarity.

And so Dionysius is associated with chaos, but also with wholeness, with a lack of individuation – while Apollo is as Nietzsche tells us, is the embodiment of separateness, individuation and the clarity associated with it.

Now in the case of film music I think it’s interesting to see how these ideas work out.

I talked at length about the use of diegetic and non-diegetic music in Vertigo:

One of the things I said was that the diegetic music (Mozart and so on) functioned on the daylight level of narrative – the things we see individual characters do onscreen – the story that “makes sense” to the extent that the movie makes sense – this is the principle of Apollo at work – the distinctness of characters the fact that we can sort of explain motivations, story elements in terms of cause and effect, and so on.

But I also mentioned that there is a subconscious or subterranean level of narrative that is told by the non-diegetic music: music that unifies completely individuated ideas – ideas that are complete opposites in fact: death and love – pain and pleasure – are unified in the musical unconscious of the film. But one of the other things I said is that, when the music is done well – it makes us feel the same things as the characters and as everybody else in the audience – in fact it unifies our experience. So that we not only know what the characters on the screen are experiencing – we experience it with them. This is the principle of Dionysius at work. And it’s no accident that the music of Wagner should play such a huge role in Vertigo’s subconscious narrative – Wagner’s music was extremely influential to Nietzsche while he was developing these ideas – he sees Wagner’s music as a consummate example of the Dionysian element in art. And in fact one of the things he says about wagners music is that its emotional effect is so strong – that is the dionysian element – the underlying chaos and tumult is so over powering that it needs the words to tame its emotional power – that without the words the audience would go into a frenzy – a sort of emotional overdose – and so the words are the apollonian element of the opera – the give shape and sense to the otherwise overpowering experience of wagner’s music.

Now one thing Nietzsche sees in the way greek tragedy develops, something he thinks is pretty sad, and which leads to the sick state of the world today -- is that the Dionysian element – the chaotic – the intoxicating element gradually starts to disappear. And at some point only the apollonian element remains. He thinks that this is due of the rise of philosophy – the idea that the world can and should be explained, understood – the rise in a belief that there is something bad about irrationality about the weird sort of religious experience associated tragedy and the rituals in the ancient cult of Dionysius.

And he thinks that there is a direct link from Socrates through to modern science, in the way that rationality approaches the question of whether or not the world makes sense. We move from the situation of tragedy – which is an artistic expression of the chaotic senselessness of the world to science in which we seek to bring the chaos of the world under control – to gain mastery over the world through understanding – through technological manipulation and so on – and that this approach to the world – mastery, control, manipulation, are at the heart of things like colonialism, and subjugation of nature, subjugation of other people -- which is why he names this situation the Socratic or Alexandrian age after Alexander the great who famously conquered much of asia north Africa and the Mediterranean world. The apolianian impulse is no longer kept in check by the expression and perhaps even celebration of the senselessness of the world – rather rationality becomes a means not only of knowing and understanding the world but of conquering it – it becomes a tool of mastery and control – over nature and over the everyday lives of every living person. So that we tend to think of our lives in terms of efficiency – goals we need to accomplish in the most efficient way possible – and that we think of the value of our lives in terms of how well we fulfill these goals – but that this makes us miss out on the full experience of our lives.

And so we’ve lost sight of how to approach the meaninglessness of the world in a way that celebrates it, affirms our strange and awkward place in the universe – we’ve lost sight of the Dionysian impulse. But what is it about tragedy that he thinks expresses this so well? The thing is that tragedy for Nietzsche is not about explaining away the seeming meaninglessness of the world (as in the case of religion) or trying to achieve salvation through rational understanding (as in the case of science) rather tragedy just stands as a powerful and beautiful EXPRESSION of this meaninglessness itself.

[SLIDE 7]

A good example of what he means here can be seen in relation to the play Oedipus Rex by Sophocles a work of Attic Greek Tragedy – Now this is a very famous play, and when most people think about Oedipus they think of the guy who killed his father and married his mother– we talk about Oedipus figures, patriarchs - figures of authority in our lives that both influence us and stand in the way of our development, perhaps figures that we both love and want to destroy. But this is not what makes Sophocles telling of Oedipus tragic. What makes the play tragic is that in fact Oedipus is a really awesome guy – smart, strong, fair-minded, who does everything right, checks all the right boxes, and yet whose life falls apart in the most horrifying way possible.

Now the story is pretty complex, but just to recap the main ideas—

Oedipus is becomes the king of Thebes by rescuing the city from the Sphinx, a monster that is terrorizing the city. Once he becomes the king, the gods start punishing his Thebes with a plague, Now Oedipus wants to figure out why the gods are punishing his city, so he sends someone to the oracle at Delphi to find out – the oracle says that they’re being punished because the king before Oedipus was murdered and the murderer was never caught. Oedipus pledges to stop at nothing to bring the murderer to justice and launches a thorough investigation. He summons a blind fortune teller who tells him to abandon the search because the truth is too terrible. Under pressure the fortune teller says to Oedipus “you yourself are the criminal” . Oedipus thinks this impossible and concludes that the fortune teller must have been paid off by one of his rivals – the queen Jocasta tells Oedipus not to worry because fortune tellers get things wrong all the time – for instance long ago a fortune teller told her that the former king (her husband) would be killed by his son, but that never happened – they gave the child to a shepard that took him far away to die on a mountainside, and that the former king was in fact killed by bandits on the road to Delphi. Long story short, Oedipus stops at nothing to uncover the truth of the matter, finally tracking down the sheppard that was supposed to have killed the former kings son. And the sheppard after telling Oedipus again and again not to look too hard for the truth finally confesses, saying that he took pity on the child and did not kill him, but gave him to a friend who then passed the child on to an adoptive family. Oedipus realizes that he was the child and that in his bitter angry youth there was this one time that, on the road to Delphi, a carriage tried to run him off the road and in a fit of road rage killed all of the people in the carriage, including one who happened to be his biological father, the former king of Thebes. Upon learning this – the queen kills herself and Oedipus gouges out his eyes – goes into exile – his daughters get taken away from him – he is completely broken.

And what we see in a tragedy like this is that even though Oedipus tries to do the right thing, and in fact he succeeds – he solves the mystery – his life still completely unravels. And there’s no reason or rhyme why Oedipus has to suffer– it is simply his fate – a complete externality – and so we see here an expression of the senselessness of the world that is powerful and moving and expressive. What we see is that when you can’t use reason and logic to fully understand - that is where the mythic element of tragedy comes in (this is an important conceit in 2001)

Now it’s not just that Oedipus is good but still gets punished – its precisely because he wants to understand everything – to get to the bottom of why the gods are punishing him that everything goes to hell. And so we see here the way that the Attic greeks, that is playwrights working in the time before Socrates and the rise of rational philosophical logic – the Attic greeks seemed to have a handle on a vision of the world as somehow being outside our control – as exhibiting a sort of senselessness that can be expressed, never be fully explained. So we have the distinction between expression and explanation.

The tragic element of the play arises out of the way the Apollonian and Dionysian elements combine in the story. The Apollonian search for knowledge and clarity – comes face to face with the senselessness of the cosmos in way that ultimately proves tragic.

But there is a nice unity of Apollonian and Dionysian elements in artistic construction of the play. The story is complex and expressive, even chaotic at times, but the way Sophocles crafts the play is extremely precise, and this precision gives shape to and intensifies the expressive power of the play.

Now the idea that tragedy acts not to explain but to express our place in the chaotic senselessness of the world is something that it share with myth. You know when you think about creationism or whatever this idea that the Judeo-Christian creation myth actually explains how the world came about is to fundamentally misunderstand what myth is about – myth literally just means what people say – its not an explanation – certainly not a logical proof – its just what people say -- its something that people say to give expression to the way they experience their lives. And for Nietzsche what greek myths are is a way to express a sort of absurdity about the world – the sort of absurdity about being the sort of creature that raises the question what does it all add up to? There’s a great comic strip I saw once that was of the ascent of man – you know a fish then some amphibian crawling out of the water then a reptile then an ape – and each animal from the fish to the ape are thinking “eat, survive, reproduce” and at the very end is a human who says “but what does it all MEAN” this is the sort of absurdity that tragedy and myth are playing with – that myths give expression to it in a way that is vivid and epic, that myths are the struggle for meaning in the face of absurdity.

Now one thing about greek tragedy and myth is the way it plays with the idea of **necessity**

And if you remember what I said about the role of necessity in causality – that a cause is a necessary connection – what we see in myth is a much different idea about necessity - one that doesn’t have to do with knowing or explaining, but that is nonetheless really powerful for expressing our situation in the world. The thing about myth is that it relies on a concept of blind fate – this idea that things just happen -- not for any rhyme or reason, but simply because they are fated to happen – and what we see with the concept of fate is a really fascinating inversion of the normal relationship between necessity and contingency. Normally in logic we call a proposition necessary if it is true and can’t possibly be false – you know if all dogs are mammals then my dog is a mammal. And something that’s contingently true is true, but it could be otherwise – for instance if I say I have a dog. It’s true that I have a dog but there its not necessarily true – its contingently true – it would be possible for me not to have a dog.

Now what does is reverse this 🡪 if something is a matter of fate it WILL necessarily happen, but that fact that it is fated is to happen contingent. There is no reason why it has to happen – it is senseless, there’s no explanation – and yet it has to happen. So fate just happens the way it happens – its necessary – but its also contingent because there is no reason why it has to happen.

And from this insight Nietzsche develops the idea of Amor Fati – the love of fate. and here we see a return to some of the ideas from the beginning of this lecture – if we can embrace our fate – love it even – not just the nice moments or the useful moments but every moment – every pain every disappointment – every failure – that is a way to enter into a much fuller experience of our lives – in which we embrace every single moment. And to remember: this is what it is to be alive– life is not a preparation for some future heaven or some historical recognition or whatever – things that are outside our lives, rather our lives our valuable just because they’re valuable. Or as Nietzsche says – only as an aesthetic phenomenon can the world be justified.

The tragic element of the play arises out of the way the Apollonian and Dionysian elements combine in the story. The Apollonian search for knowledge and clarity – comes face to face with the senselessness of the cosmos in way that ultimately proves tragic.

and that tragedy essentially functions like a myth.

Now what does this tell us about tragedy – Oedipus wanted to

that the former king was killed by his son.

Freud and the Oedipus complex and so on, the idea of killing your When we’re talking Greek tragedy involves

But interestingly, because we experience the world in terms of causality we also therefore experience the world in terms of separate and distinct things – because a cause and its effect have to be different things – if they aren’t then to it’s meaningless to talk about causality at all.

Now this brings us to the second thing we rely on to make sense of the world

The idea of individuation – or as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche call it, the principium individuationis (the principle of individuation) – and this principle is even more fundamental than causality -> in order to say anything about the world – like x explains y – or even I experience x let alone understand x – we have to think of the world in terms of different things – something that experiences and something that to be experienced.

But in rare instances, when we are swept up in an experience of music for instance we can glimpse the underlying unity of the world in the way music can connect us to each other at the level of feeling.

and to see why its strange let’s look at it in terms of

But Schopenhauer also thinks that we can’t help but experience the world in terms of distinct objects – that **that** is just the way our eyes, ears and brains are set up. In other words we can’t help but see the world in terms of:

Space

Time

Cause and Effect

I think it’s intuitive why he says we experience the world in terms of Space and Time: Schopenhauer, following Kant, actually has detailed logical proofs for his claim that space and time are just illusions, but I won’t get into that here -> But we did talk about how an alien species that can see in higher-order dimensions might be able to see through time, and so would have a different view of what the world is really like. But for us, the main idea is that because we experience the world in terms of space and time, we necessarily experience it in terms of distinct objects – if two objects inhabit exactly the same space at exactly the same time, from the microscopic level on up – we say that these objects are in fact the same object. But if true reality is outside of space and time

time – If time just another dimension we could, for instance, imagine alien species for instance that could see through time – but also if we examine the structure of logic – we can see that it sort of operates outside of time: the most basic axiom of logic is the law of identity that A=A. but this

two aspects of the narrative, I called one the daylight narrative – that is, all the stuff we see onscreen, what the character’s say to each other, etc. and that this was associated with is that there seems to be the daylight